

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 08299 070749Z

15

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 OMB-01 AID-20 DRC-01 /147 W

----- 061024

R 070627Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6900

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

USSAG

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 8299

E.O. 11652

TAGS: MOPS, VS, VN LA

SUBJECT: SOUVANNA'S VIEWS ON NORTH VIETNAMESE

WITHDRAWAL FROM LAOS

1. IN MY TALK YESTERDAY WITH PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA HE OPINED THAT THE SHELLING OF NHA BE AND NVA ATTACKS IN QUANG DUC HERALD THE START OF THIS SEASON'S OFFENSIVE. SOUVANNA SAID HE WAS DISCOURAGED BY THE TURN OF EVENTS IN SVN. HE SAID THE OTHER SIDE WOULD NOW REQUIRE THE USE OF THE TRAIL SYSTEM UNTIL THE RAINS BEGIN. THIS MEANS THAT THERE IS NO HOPE FOR THE FORMATION OF A COALITION GOVERNMENT UNTIL MARCH/ APRIL WHICH WOULD BE ABOUT 60 DAYS BEFORE THE MONSOON WHEN SEASONAL USE OF THE TRAIL WOULD CEASE. SOUVANNA SAID HE EXPECTED THE PATHET LAO TO STALL BLATANTLY UNTIL THAT TIME.

2. I DEMURRED AS I HAVE IN PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS OF THIS FAMILIAR TOPIC AND EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT LINKAGE BETWEEN ENEMY ACTIVITY ON THE TRAIL AND POLITICAL
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PROGRESS IN VIENTIANE MAY BE LESS CLOSE THAN SOUVANNA

BELIEVES.

3. COMMENT: SOUVANNA HARBORS THE CURIOUS BELIEF THAT THE NVA WILL WITHDRAW FROM LAOS, EVEN FROM THE PANHANDLE, IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE AGREEMENT, WHEREAS IT IS OUR BELIEF THAT THE CREATION OF THE PGNU NEED NOT AND ALMOST CERTAINLY WILL NOT IMPEDE NVA USE OF THE TRAIL SYSTEM AND THAT THESE TWO PROBLEMS ARE NOT NECESSARILY LINKED IN THE MINDS OF DRV LEADERS.
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

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To: STATE
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